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AUTHOR Taylor, Judith Combes; Buchau, Katrina

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the federal government has designated 105 communities across the country, including many urban neighborhoods, as Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities (EZ/ECs). At the same time, many urban school districts have launched school-to-career initiatives to help keep at-risk youth in school and improve their academic achievement and career prospects. A study was conducted to determine whether coordinating school-to-career with EZ/EC efforts would provide new resources and opportunities that would help at-risk youth. Research was conducted through a telephone-based survey of officials in communities targeted because both EZ/EC and school-to-career initiatives were underway. The study found a wide spectrum: in some places, very little collaborations exists; in others, there is some collaborative activity, although it is not very developed. Based on the surveys, more expensive interviews were conducted with people in Boston and Tacoma, two communities in which promising collaboration efforts are underway. The study concluded that collaboration between the two systems is possible but that it requires commitment of time and resources by both parties. This report is organized into four parts: (1) an explanation of why linking school-to-career initiatives to zones would benefit youth and a summary of the project; (2) profiles of Boston and Tacoma initiatives; (3) key lessons learned about collaboration between the sectors; and (4) four appendixes providing more information about school-to-career, EZ/ECs, federal grants relevant to serving at-risk youth, and a list of persons interviewed for the project. (KC)

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Judith Combes Taylor
Katrina Buchau

Northeast And Islands Regional Educational Laboratory
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Judith Combes Taylor
Katrina Buchau

Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University (LAB)

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222 Richmond Street, Suite 300
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Phone: 800-521-9550
Email: lab@brown.edu
Web: http://www.lab.brown.edu
Fax: 401-421-7650

Jobs for the Future, based in Boston, Massachusetts, is a LAB partner organization.

About the authors:

Judith Combes Taylor is Senior Project Manager, and Katrina Buchau is Project Associate at Jobs for the Future.

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Introduction

In recent years, the federal government has designated 105 communities across the country, including many urban neighborhoods, as Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities (EZ/ECs). During the same period, many urban school districts have launched school-to-career initiatives to help keep at-risk youth in school and improve their academic achievement and career prospects.[1] This project began with a hunch about potential opportunities for improving the education of these at-risk young people through linking school-to-career initiatives with federal support for urban Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. We asked the question: Can the coordination of school-to-career with EZ/EC efforts provide new resources and opportunities that would improve the career and learning prospects of at-risk youth, both those in the school system and those who have dropped out without earning a high school diploma? What is the potential outcome of combining school-to-career and EZ/EC initiatives?

Research to investigate this question consisted of a telephone-based survey of a number of officials in communities targeted because both EZ/EC and school-to-career initiatives were underway. The survey sought to determine whether collaboration exists and, if so, whether it is resulting in innovative programming. What we found crosses a wide spectrum. In some places, very little collaboration exists; in others, there is some collaborative activity, although it is not very developed. Based on the surveys, we conducted more extensive interviews with people in Boston and Tacoma, two communities in which promising collaboration efforts are underway.

We believe that the findings of this project point to some useful lessons for educators. On the one hand, collaboration between school systems and EZ/ECs is possible and can yield benefits for young people. However, achieving those benefits requires a commitment on the part of all parties to work together, including in that commitment the time and other resources needed to meet regularly as well as a tolerance of the differing missions, cultures, and languages of each partner.

This report is organized in four parts:

- Part one explains why linking school-to-career initiatives to zones would benefit youth who are at risk.[2] This section summarizes the project and reviews its findings.
- Part two profiles Boston, Massachusetts, and Tacoma, Washington. Examples from these cities highlight linkages and collaborations between school-to-career initiatives and zones.
- Part three synthesizes key lessons learned about the ways in which school-to-career initiatives can be brought into a partnership with zones to create innovative approaches to helping youth at risk.
- The appendices provide further information about topics discussed in the summary document. These appendices are included for readers interested in learning more about the themes and opportunities presented in the report. The appendices are (I) an introduction to school-to-career; (II) a primer on Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities; (III) an overview of some key federal grants relevant to strategies for serving at-risk and out-of-school youth; and (IV) a list of individuals interviewed for this project.

PART ONE

Why Link School-to-Career and Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities

School-to-career is an education movement that emphasizes school-based and work-based learning to improve both academic performance and preparation for work and careers (see Appendix I). Its emphasis on contextualized learning and "real-world" experience provides education that is engaging and has particular resonance for youth who are "turned off" by traditional academic settings. As such, the school-to-career approach to education could present an excellent strategy for Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities that focus on young people at risk.

The federal Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities initiative is aimed at communities with high levels of unemployment and poverty (see Appendix II). Its goal is to improve these communities through a wide range of local, community-led, economic and workforce development initiatives.

The school-to-career approach is a strategy these communities could use in re-engaging their youth in education, as well as preparing them to enter the labor force. In addition, school-to-career initiatives can benefit from working together with Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities, taking advantage of available funding as well as the partnerships and community connections within the zones.

School-to-Career

School-to-career is an education movement aimed at improving the academic and career preparedness of young people.[3] School-to-career initiatives are generally characterized by:

- applied learning in the classroom
- work experiences in community or workplace settings
- coordination between learning at work and at school
- structured relationships between young people and adults outside schools

Although precursors to and models for school-to-career existed before 1990, the 1994 federal School To Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) provided the impetus for the current expansion of initiatives. The STWOA established five-year seed grants to states for developing and implementing school-to-career programs. It requires broad collaborations, at the state and local levels, among educators, employers, and other stakeholders in education. It also mandates certain program design elements, including school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities. While school-to-career initiatives funded under the act vary widely, they invariably emphasize learning in the real-world context of work and a pedagogical approach that engages and motivates students through active, experiential learning.

School-to-career approaches show promise for educating young people who are at risk of dropping out of school, and there has been a modest amount of experimentation in using school-to-career principles in education and training programs for dropouts.[4] These young people are excellent candidates for a school-to-career approach in that they are highly likely to have experienced failure in traditional classrooms characterized by inactive and abstract learning that seems unconnected to real-life concerns. In contrast, learning in school-to-career settings is delivered in real-world contexts. School-to-career grounds theory in application and frees students from their desk chairs to engage in work and related projects.

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities[5]

As many scholars have documented, the centers of America's cities have suffered grievously in recent decades.[6] The causes are many—the decline of manufacturing and its relatively well-paying low-skill jobs, the migration of middle-class urban residents to suburbs, and so on. The toll these changes have taken on individuals and community life in these inner cities has been great.

In 1994, President Clinton introduced a program to rebuild these distressed communities. Called the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program, it differs from previous community renewal programs in that it is both less narrowly focused and less regulated. The EZ/EC program is very flexible and seeks to support the design and implementation of local strategies that are tailored to individual communities. One result is that the structure administering each grant varies widely, from a city grants administrator in one community we studied to grassroots organizations in several other locations.

The EZ/EC program was designed to address a wide range of issues, from "traditional" business and economic development to community development, human services, and workforce development. While there is no requirement to support or develop education and training services, many EZ/ECs have chosen to focus on human resource development for both youth and adults as a means of community and individual empowerment.

School-to-career seems to present a relevant and important strategy for zone communities with human resource development goals. Jobs for the Future's research investigated the status of collaboration between these two initiatives. Did the individuals involved in each know of one another? Were they communicating? Were they co-sponsoring programs?

How the Research Was Conducted

The research consisted primarily of a review of national practices regarding links between EZ/ECs and school-to-career in urban sites. The first step was to identify states (1) with urban EZ/ECs and (2) that had demonstrated some significant progress in implementing school-to-career (as indicated by receiving an

STWOA implementation grant). We started by placing phone calls to state and local contacts that seemed likely to have knowledge of promising practices in their jurisdictions. These initial calls were made primarily to school-to-career officials; Jobs for the Future is familiar with the school-to-career area and lists of school-to-career contacts are readily available. Documentation of "zones" was less complete and more difficult to obtain.

Ultimately, these interviews focused our attention on twelve communities in nine states. In each case, we reached two or more respondents, representing two or more perspectives, who were familiar with local developments regarding at-risk youth, zones, or school-to-career. Detailed notes from all telephone interviews were transcribed and grouped by community. These notes were analyzed with respect to (1) extent of local collaboration,[7] and (2) cross-site lessons for educators and other advocates for at-risk youth.

In two cases—Tacoma and Boston—the interviews revealed collaborative initiatives that were developed fully enough to warrant more extensive documentation. In Boston, where Jobs for the Future is located, we visited key individuals who helped us track developments over the length of the research project. In the case of Tacoma, we solicited additional telephone-based input from local officials.[8]

Research Findings

Our research revealed a wide range of practices. At one extreme were several communities in which little collaboration had evolved between school-to-career and the zone. In at least one case, the school system/school-to-career program and the zone had attempted to establish a collaborative venture for young people at risk, but they had not succeeded in doing so. In these communities, schools and EZ/EC efforts operated within the "silos" of their own programs or systems, with little substantive connection to one another.

In one such community, the zone official reported that school personnel had stopped attending the zone's strategic planning meetings early on. Perhaps as a result, education had not emerged as a zone-funded priority. In that same community, a respondent told us that a school system official had recently told her that he felt education was being left out of economic revitalization planning, and that it was not even being asked to the table. She observed that community-based organizations involved in economic and workforce development had undertaken many initiatives that have much in common with the schools, but that the schools and these organizations know little about one another.

This same respondent noted that separate funding streams inhibit collaboration among various educational and workforce development organizations. For example, many workforce development funding sources require the targeting of assistance to narrowly defined populations, while educational institutions and funds are more likely to require programs to serve the entire school-age population.

In one community, federally funded school-to-career activities targeted both in-school and out-of-school youth. A zone representative participated in some school-to-career meetings aimed at developing grants to support programs for at-risk youth, but nothing came of these sessions. One official pointed out to us that

jurisdictional boundaries made collaboration difficult—"The system wasn't properly set up for it." The county administered the zone, but the Private Industry Council (PIC)—which administered funding under the Job Training Partnership Act and the STWOA—was not closely aligned with the county. Recently, a new Workforce Development Board has been created, merging the PIC with the regional Workforce Development Committee. The respondent noted that this should promote closer links to the county and improve opportunities to work together in the future.

More systematic collaboration was evident in perhaps a third of the communities studied. In two cities, for example, the zone supported organizations that provide "school-to-career-type" activities for at-risk and out-of-school youth, but no connection between the school-to-career implementation structure and the zone had been formally established. For example, one of the communities had recently obtained an Out-of-School Youth Grant and an Urban/Rural Opportunities Grant (UROG), neither of which seemed to involve the zone in a significant way.[9] Zone representatives attended some joint meetings with other parties in developing these grant proposals. One zone official, acknowledging that these joint meetings did not represent focused, planned cooperation, said that the zone leadership "would have wished for deeper, more fundamental collaboration, but not at the drop of a hat as is sometimes required when working on federal grant proposals."

In the other community, a private non-profit organization is implementing school-to-career, while recipients of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) implement the training components of the zone. The JTPA recipient is closely connected to school-to-career implementation, both through its work with site-based groups in each school and through directing its funding for disadvantaged young people toward programs that use school-to-career approaches. Because the JTPA recipient is implementing some zone training components, school-to-career activities may become available for zone residents, although these activities will not involve the zone administration. The community recently won an Urban/Rural Opportunities Grant, and chances are good that a coherent initiative for out-of-school youth, with school-to-career components, will evolve. It is not clear yet whether the zone will be involved.

Finally, three communities offered promising examples of collaboration between the zone and other organizations to expand school-to-career approaches to youth at risk. In these communities, we found evidence of effective communication among the zone and the organizations involved in school-to-career, as well as evidence that these organizations worked together to address the issues involved in educating at-risk youth. In one community, the zone has funded three alternative education providers to work with the Private Industry Council to infuse school-to-career approaches into the programs of those providers. That zone has also played a significant supporting role in the implementation of the community's Department of Labor Youth Opportunities Area (Kulick) grant.[10] In another community, the zone has set aside funding for school-to-career, waiting to see how the zone could best use this funding in developing the school-to-career system. In the third community, the zone played a key catalytic role in bringing parties together to apply for an Urban/Rural Opportunities Grant, and it continues to convene the partnership that is implementing this grant to improve school-to-career options for both in-school and out-of-school youth.

PART TWO

City Profile: Boston

Boston, the capital of Massachusetts and the largest city in New England, has a population of 560,000 (3 million in the metropolitan area). Historically a port city, it is perhaps better known today for its many universities and colleges. The mainstays of the economy, industries such as health care and financial services, are information-based and education intensive.

It is not surprising that Boston is pioneering a strong, school-to-career-oriented program for youth at risk, both in and out of school, with involvement from its zone. Boston has a long-established agreement among community partners—the Boston Compact—with major businesses in the lead and participation from secondary and postsecondary education institutions. The Compact aims to improve young people's education and economic opportunities.

Launched in 1982, the Boston Compact has been the foundation and framework for much of the city's efforts to improve those opportunities. It called for improvements in student attendance, academic performance, and school retention in return for increased youth opportunities in private-sector jobs and higher education. Revised twice (in 1988 and 1994), the Compact has retained its initial focus on access to jobs and education for all the city's youth.

Boston's well-regarded Private Industry Council, designated to implement the Compact, has a history of spearheading programs for young people at risk, and it is strongly committed to a school-to-career model. Moreover, the Boston Public Schools (BPS) system has established a strong school-to-career program. For example, several high schools are committed to whole-school restructuring using the school-to-career model, and the BPS has created a school-to-career office. The BPS funds school-based staff positions to implement school-to-career and coordinate pedagogical and structural changes.

Since its outset, one of the Compact's major goals has been school retention. The Compact had promised jobs to young people who stayed in school and graduated. While the Private Industry Council had initial responsibility for the Compact's non-school aspects, school retention required more robust efforts than just the promise of a job at the end. Thus, the PIC began to use Job Training Partnership Act youth funds to station career specialists within the high schools, and these staff members acted as case managers for young people identified as at-risk of dropping out.[11]

From these origins, at least two distinct initiatives have evolved. One is ProTech, a program that links employers and young people *in schools* for special employment and learning opportunities. Many features originally developed in ProTech were subsequently incorporated in the federal School To Work Opportunities Act, and Massachusetts received a grant during the first round of STWOA funding. The BPS has now

established a broad set of program options within the school-to-career framework, including ProTech, the National Academy model, and other approaches.

The second initiative is an effort on behalf of *out-of-school* youth using a school-to-career approach. The PIC has established several staff positions dedicated to out-of-school youth initiatives.[12] These staff work, for example, with an alliance of alternative schools to enhance educational programming in a school-to-career model. As in Boston's mainstream school-to-career programs, a career pathway is being established in these alternative schools. However, to accommodate the myriad interests and education backgrounds of young people in alternative schools, the pathway is not organized around an industry; instead it is being developed around the "occupational cluster" of customer service.

A key participant in this development is the Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning (formerly the Bay State Skills Corporation). It has developed Diploma Plus, a program that adapts school-to-career approaches for alternative education settings and links these alternative education programs to postsecondary institutions. Diploma Plus is being piloted in three alternative schools.

Working with city leaders, the PIC also helped ensure that the strategic plan for Boston's zone would place a priority on, and provide funding for, out-of-school youth using a school-to-career approach.

In December 1994, Boston was designated an Enhanced Enterprise Community (EEC). The city received the $3 million that all Enterprise Community grantees receive, as well as an additional $22 million in funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Economic Development Initiative and $22 million in loan guarantees. The city's EEC strategic plan encompasses a range of activities aimed at improving the zone's economic vitality, including "education and work readiness." One of the key activities the EEC is undertaking in this area is working with out-of-school youth.

To support implementation of the school-to-career model, the EEC has launched an initiative that will provide $500,000 to three alternative schools that have a significant proportion of students from the zone. The zone will also provide funds to the PIC for engaging in connecting activities.

In a related development, Boston has received a Kulick grant. The proposal for this grant grew out of the experiences of people working directly with youth on the street: beat cops, street workers, and probation officers. They all said essentially the same thing: "I know when a kid is ready to turn his or her life around, but I don't have anything to offer them right now. If resources were available—to create more slots in alternative education programs, for example—I could make participation a condition of their probation." At the time the grant was written, however, the alternative schools had no vacant slots.

Boston's $2.2 million Kulick grant is intended to help these youth get a job and a GED. Five PIC career specialists are dedicated to working with young people seriously at risk, living in the zone, and involved in court cases. The specialists will provide outreach services and initial assessments and counseling; they will also accept referrals from youth employment centers, police officers, probation officers, and others. Employment specialists, located in the youth centers, will then be pulled in to identify education opportunities and jobs.[13]

City Profile: Tacoma

Tacoma, Washington, a port city with a population of 185,000, is located on Puget Sound, less than 40 miles from both Seattle and Olympia, the state capital. Some of its key industries are health care, technology, and port-related commerce. In addition, several major military bases are located in or near Tacoma.

Designated an Enterprise Community in December 1994, Tacoma received $2.95 million to support its community revitalization efforts. A strategic plan was designed, and it is being administered by the Tacoma Empowerment Consortium (TEC), a non-profit agency formed specifically to implement the EC plan. Composed of several key area organizations and agencies, the TEC has full-time staff working on implementing the Enterprise Community initiative.

The TEC's activities include improving Tacoma's technology infrastructure, investing in business expansion, and supporting various services in education, training, and entrepreneurship. As part of its activities around education/training/youth, the TEC played a key role in catalyzing a collaborative effort to apply for and implement a federal Urban/Rural Opportunities Grant (UROG). The TEC convened a range of community stakeholders to submit the UROG application to the Department of Labor in the spring of 1996. The TEC and seven Tacoma partner organizations are implementing this grant, with funding of $1.9 million over five years. The aim is to improve the school-to-career transition of in-school and out-of-school youth to ultimately help them attain the EC's goal of community self-sufficiency.

The UROG project's primary objective is to create a system of school-to-work opportunities for *all* youth.[14] Originally housed in TEC's Employment Training Committee, the project is now overseen and implemented by the Tacoma School-to-Work Partnership Steering Committee, and it is managed by a TEC staff member. The School-to-Work Partnership is composed of eight key Tacoma agencies involved in education, training, and youth development (see box on opposite page).

The first year of the grant, 1996-1997, was devoted to solidifying the partnership, learning to work together, and developing a common conception of school-to-work and what it would look like in Tacoma. In this first year, the seven UROG partners signed bilateral contracts with the TEC, but this process was time-consuming and created a difficult framework in which to work. In year two, TEC and its partner organizations negotiated a single contract that all parties signed. They defined a common vision and articulated goals up front, leaving roles and budgets to be settled after the goals were established. The contract, the "Collective Vision of the Tacoma School-to-Work Partnership for the 1997-1998 School Year," outlines the background of the UROG, the plan of action for the year, and the roles of the various partners.

The plan for Year Two addresses both in-school and out-of-school reforms. Essentially, it is concerned with recruiting and retrieving out-of-school youth, while reforming schools to make education more relevant and responsive to youth and encourage them to stay in school. The state of Washington strongly encourages this joint emphasis on in-school and out-of-school youth. One of the articulated goals of the governor's school-to-work task force is that all students benefit from school-to-work opportunities.

The goal for the second year is to pilot a model of school-to-work in two community-based alternative high schools within the Enterprise Community. The schools are the Urban League Academy and Centro Latino Alternative High School. These two sites will serve one hundred students. The schools will recruit students to their facilities and assess their need for skills and education/training needs. Eighty students will receive work-based learning experiences, complemented by educational programs at the school. Students who complete the program will receive diplomas from Tacoma Public Schools. Moreover, in an effort to tackle the broader social issues that are barriers to the success of out-of-school and at-risk youth, the Metropolitan Development Council and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will provide human service supports. The partnership hopes to roll this model out to a number of Tacoma's thirteen other alternative schools in the future.

Partners Implementing the Tacoma Urban/Rural Opportunities Grant

- **Tacoma Empowerment Consortium**
- **Tacoma Public Schools**
- **Centro Latino**, a community-based organization that is one of the two alternative school pilot sites of school-to-career strategies located in the Enterprise Community
- **Tacoma Urban League**, home to the Tacoma Urban League Academy, the second alternative school pilot site for school-to-career
- **Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department**
- **Metro Development Council**, a community action agency that focuses on the needs of low-income populations
- **Tacoma/Pierce County Private Industry Council**, which takes the lead in creating work-based learning opportunities for youth. In conjunction with the Urban League and Centro Latino, the council brings employers on board, helps structure and design learning experiences, and coordinates and conducts training for future career program employees.
- **Pierce County Central Labor Council**, which helps identify pre-apprenticeship opportunities, works with labor, and organizes apprenticeship categories

Tacoma's UROG efforts concerning in-school youth focus on developing a comprehensive guidance program within the district that both deepens the role of guidance at the secondary school level and extends it down to the primary and middle schools. Each high school in the district has a career center. These centers were previously staffed half time; UROG funding has allowed schools to expand to include a full-time staff person, and the school-to-work partnership plans to open a career center at one alternative school. In addition, UROG funding will be used for staff development and training, integrating academic and applied learning, and helping further develop the career pathways model being piloted at one of the high schools. Before receiving the UROG grant, Tacoma Public Schools had begun implementing a career pathways model in one high school and its feeder schools with the use of state school-to-work funding. There has been collaboration between the implementation of the state funding and the UROG funding, although it is still developmental and has been challenging because of staff changes on both sides.

PART THREE

Lessons Learned for Educators and Others Interested in Working with Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities

1. ***To influence zone priorities and activities, educators should get involved as early as possible in the development of a zone, preferably during the planning phase.***

The legislation and guidelines for the Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities impose an accountability structure that commits the zones to specific goals and identified performance indicators. Once designated as an Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community, the local community must create a "benchmark document" that specifies planned activities and timelines. Once these activities are designed, the EZ/EC is less likely to pursue other activities. Therefore, if the plan does not indicate activities involving youth at risk and school-to-career collaboration, the likelihood of such activities being organized will be small. Communities can amend their benchmark documents through conversations with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, but once a certain path is embarked upon, it is not as easy to alter resource commitments. The best strategy is to become involved early in the planning phase.

Boston has inserted clear goals in its zone plan for using school-to-career approaches for helping disadvantaged young people. As a result, the city is in the process of implementing that plan as well as raising additional funds from other sources to support the activity. (See part two for more details.) In contrast, one of the communities in which little collaboration had evolved reported no clear goals in the zone's plan around youth, just a general education and training goal. Furthermore, it was becoming clear that the zone would not be able to accomplish all its goals with the funds awarded, and that those involved were "selecting their most do-able objectives and just trying to reach them." It was highly unlikely that any new objectives would be added to this plan.

Sometimes the strategic planning concept/process seems to inhibit elaboration of already established goals. For example, a plan might have included a goal to provide education and training for out-of-school youth but without including collaboration with the schools or school-to-career. In a tightly budgeted zone, funds might not even be available to support staff time for participating in meetings with school officials to plan such collaboration.[15]

2. ***The boundaries of the zones rarely match those of school districts and other political jurisdictions, posing a challenge in creating successful collaboration.***

Although one intention of the EZ/EC program is to foster the integration of programs at the community level, the actual structuring of the zones sometimes inhibits that integration. Most of the designated empowerment zones are sub-regions of a larger municipality which, at the least, complicates integrative efforts. In many cases, the zones' borders do not map to school district boundaries or other jurisdictions. In Boston, for example, the zone does not coincide with the school system's internal sub-districts. Rather, it encompasses portions of several sub-districts.

Respondents in several communities reported that the sub-city boundaries of the local EZ/EC created a problem. In at least one community, a respondent noted a reluctance to appear to "favor" the zone by establishing a special initiative with or for it.

3. ***People in schools, zones, and organizations working with youth speak different professional languages and come from different work cultures. Educators and others wishing to effectively combine resources for the benefit of young people at risk must acknowledge and work within this reality.***

At least three groups are involved in working with youth: schools/educators, economic/community development agencies, and workforce development groups. Each group has its own professional language and culture. People in a number of communities referred to ways in which the different cultures/languages of schools and workforce-oriented organizations interfered with collaboration. For example, public education promotes the value of learning for its own sake and for a variety of purposes like "good citizenship." Organizations whose goal is to develop or employ workers have a more focused and utilitarian interest in education. Educators become alarmed when they hear workforce development specialists speak as though the primary value of the schools is to produce capable workers. Conversely, workforce development specialists and employers become impatient with educators who disclaim any role in preparing young people for success in work.

People from the zones tend to be either community activists or economic development specialists, neither of which are likely to be familiar with and well-disposed toward education, schools, and workforce development. For example, in several instances people from "community" zones—who had warded off takeover by more powerful organizations through confrontational tactics—made it clear that they were unfamiliar with job training and not much more experienced in working with school systems.

4. ***For school systems interested in promoting collaboration with the zones to support school-to-career programming for youth at risk, this research found two promising approaches: obtaining additional funds to support collaborative activities and having an outside organization play a connecting role between schools and the zones.***

Successful collaborations took one of two general approaches. The first was to obtain additional grant funds (Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants, Out-of-School Youth Grants, etc.) to support planning and connecting activities.[16] Proposals that demonstrated the active participation of the zone and the school system(s) as well as the school-to-career implementation structure appear to have received favorable consideration.

In the second approach, the collaboration was made possible due to the connecting role of a third organization, outside either the EZ/EC planning group or the school system.

Job Training Partnership Act recipients played this connecting role in several communities, apparently for several reasons. First, they have long been involved in training and education for disadvantaged youth through Job Training Partnership Act-funded programs. In addition, they are often key players in local school-to-career partnerships. Third, they represent employers concerned about the quality of school graduates.

In the communities in this study, the connecting organization(s) had funds and mandates sufficiently flexible to support the staff time for phone calls, meetings, and travel essential for forging collaborations. In fact, in several communities, one sign of fruitful collaboration was the assignment of an individual to perform these functions. In some instances, the individual came from a Job Training Partnership Act recipient; in others, the position had school-to-career funding.

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NOTES

Introduction

[1] For the most part, this paper uses the term "school-to-career" rather than "school-to-work" because the key to self-sufficiency in the labor market is being able to advance in a career, not simply getting a job. Some people have regarded school-to-work as misleading because it implies a one-time transition to employment and unappealing because it is associated with entry-level work rather than career advancement.

[2] This paper uses the abbreviated term "zone" to refer to a federally funded Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community.

Why Link School-to-Career and Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities

[3] See Appendix I for a more detailed description of school-to-career.

[4] The federal government supports the development of school-to-career programming for out-of-school youth through a number of grants. Please see Appendix III for an overview.

[5] This information on the EZ/EC program comes from a variety of sources, listed at the end of Appendix II.

[6] See, for example, Wilson, William Julius. (1996). *When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

How the Research was Conducted

[7] Prior to conducting our research, we had not established objective criteria for assessing the extent of collaboration. However, a continuum of collaboration emerged during the research process. That continuum ranged from, at the low end, *no communication* between parties to *occasional contact* between school-to-career and EZ/EC officials (e.g., attending some meetings together) to, at the high end, conducting *joint projects* to benefit youth at risk.

Research Findings

[8] One lesson learned concerned the research process itself. The sorts of initiatives we were seeking are difficult to locate. Many officials contacted operate primarily within their own silos, with little information about developments outside those silos. The initiatives themselves tended to be "low profile," known chiefly to the small circle of people working directly on them.

[9] The departments of Education and Labor award Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants to local school-to-career partnerships in high-poverty areas to address the special implementation issues these areas face. Out-of-School Youth Grants support the development of school-to-career programming for out-of-school youth. Appendix III contains additional information about these programs.

[10] The Department of Labor's Youth Opportunities Area Grants, also known as "Kulick" grants in memory of long-time Department of Labor employee Donald Kulick, fund pilot programs aimed at improving labor market access and outcomes for out-of-school youth aged 16-24 within the EZ/ECs. Further information on this grant is provided in Appendix III.

City Profile: Boston

[11] The PIC moved quickly to develop additional/alternative sources of funding. Federal Job Training Partnership Act funds—which soon began to decline—were not considered "hard" enough to support this important initiative. Moreover, they could only be used to serve youth who met a federal definition of disadvantaged. The PIC wanted to serve all youth, not just those officially "at risk." Today, PIC career specialists in schools are supported by a significant allocation of local BPS funds as well as state funds.

[12] Two positions are "hard-funded," and four are funded through a recent Kulick grant.

[13] Boston is seeking funding from the Boston Federal Prosecutor's Office of the Justice Department to provide similar services, on the same model, for young people outside the zone—kids who are "way, way out of school" and involved with gang life or something similar. The partnership in this proposal includes the Boston Police Department, State Attorney General, and Safe Neighborhoods initiative.

City Profile: Tacoma

[14] While Jobs for the Future prefers the term "school-to-career," the older term is retained in this profile following the practice of the Tacoma Empowerment Initiative.

Lessons Learned for Educators and Others Interested in Working with Empowerment Zones/ Enterprise Communities

[15] This dilemma is often mirrored in school systems, where teachers have no salaried time to attend outside meetings or plan agendas.

[16] The grants were all federal in the instances we found.

Appendix I

School-to-Career

This appendix provides:

- ✓ an overview of school-to-career
- ✓ references for more information

There are many useful resources concerning school-to-career available to the interested reader, both electronic and printed. Some of these are listed at the end of this appendix. For the convenience of the reader, we are reproducing here a brief but succinct summary of school-to-career and its promise, developed by Jobs for the Future.[1]

School-to-Career: A Lever for Motivation and Learning

The school-to-career movement has the potential not only to help young people become more proactive in planning for their futures but also to address the motivational and instructional challenges that stand in the way of raising student achievement. School-to-career initiatives combine:

- Applied learning in the classroom
- Work experiences in community or workplace settings
- Coordination between learning at work and at school
- Strong relationships between young people and adults outside school

In forging closer links between in-school and out-of-school learning experiences and in promoting contextual learning, school-to-career addresses directly the challenges of reaching and motivating students, thereby complementing and strengthening standards-based reform efforts.

Like the movement for standards-based reform, the current school-to-career movement originated in the 1980s. Early in that decade, a number of high-profile studies directed attention to the labor market problems of job seekers without college education.[2] At the same time, many employers were becoming frustrated with scattershot and largely superficial partnerships with the public schools that failed to address new labor market realities. The poor performance of vocational education prompted Congress in 1990 to rewrite the Vocational Education Act (PL 101-392), putting much more emphasis on higher academic standards, close connections with employers, and new links to postsecondary institutions, particularly two-year colleges. In addition, with support from foundations and the federal government, schools and businesses around the country launched or expanded innovative efforts to connect school and work more effectively.

Enthusiasm for these models was the catalyst for the 1994 federal School To Work Opportunities Act (see box). Its passage has led to further program experimentation and growth through developmental grants to innovative states and localities.

The School To Work Opportunities Act

The School To Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (PL 103-239) provides five-year federal "seed grants" to help states develop and implement school-to-career programs. These efforts are required to involve broad collaboration at the state and local levels among employers, organized labor, educators, and public agencies responsible for economic and workforce development, education, and human services.

Key design elements include:

School-Based Learning: Integration of high-quality academic and vocational instruction, improved links between high school and related postsecondary programs, and conscious strategies for introducing students to all aspects of a broadly defined industry, through "career majors" that students choose by eleventh grade

Work-Based Learning: Opportunities for students to obtain work experience, on-the-job training, and adult mentoring coordinated with school studies

Connecting Activities: Activities to recruit employer partners, match students with workplace opportunities and mentors, and help schools and employers strengthen their collaboration

Career Development: Activities in schools and workplaces to help students become aware of their interests and strengths, learn about career options, formulate goals, and make wise choices about their educational program

The act is intended to provide a temporary infusion of start-up resources to states and localities. By late 1996, the federal government had provided $643 million to 37 states, which are required to pass the majority of these funds to local and regional partnerships. By mid–1996, more than 1,000 local partnerships had received federally-funded grants. Further grants from the $1.345 billion authorized by Congress will be awarded over the next several years. The act and its catalytic investments are authorized only through 2001.

The design of school-to-career programs varies greatly:

- Some programs are small and intensive, targeting the labor needs of a few local employers. For example, the Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program in Printing served sixty-six students in five sites in 1995-96.
- Others are designed to change the learning experience of an entire school. At Roosevelt High School in Portland, Oregon, all ninth–graders have job-shadowing experiences as part of a mini-course in career exploration, followed by a tenth-grade curriculum organized around one of six broad career clusters.

- Career Academies, pioneered in the late 1960s, are schools-within-a-school that group 125 to 250 students in a program with their own teachers, frequently organized around an occupational theme, such as health care, graphic arts, or finance. Academies usually admit ninth- or tenth-grade students and emphasize interdisciplinary learning, projects, employer involvement in curriculum, and internships in the eleventh and twelfth grades.
- Many vocational education programs have tried to improve quality and student outcomes through closer connections to employers and/or community colleges. Technical Preparation programs emphasize smoother transitions between high school and community college. Some have begun to add a workplace component. Co-op placements provide young people with work experience; however, only a minority of co-op programs attempt to link the work experience with changes in classroom learning.
- Community service placements and school-based enterprises run by young people sometimes serve as alternatives to internships and apprenticeships in providing a "real world" context for learning. Students in service-learning programs might conduct environmental quality checks in their neighborhoods, serve as translators for non-English speaking patients at community health clinics, or tutor elementary school children. As many as 18 percent of U.S. high schools house one or more student-run enterprise(s), including restaurants, graphic arts and print shops, car repair businesses, and other retail establishments.[3]
- In a few communities, school-to-career strategies are being used to change students' high school experience across the district. For example, the five communities in Jobs for the Future's Benchmark Communities Initiative—Boston, Louisville/Jefferson County, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and North Clackamas, Oregon—have agreed to a common set of measurable five-year goals for changes in instructional practice, work-and-community learning opportunities, and school and district policies that can facilitate expansion of school-to-career opportunities to all high school students.

Whatever their specific program elements, school-to-career initiatives are based upon a creative combination of high academic expectations with engaging work-based learning experiences in firms or in the community. The introduction of external standards, relationships, and responsibilities has proven to be an effective way to unlock student motivation and encourage innovative instructional methods.

When young people engage in real work, they learn lessons they are often unwilling to accept from teachers in school. Work-based learning can provide connections and contexts for learning that schools cannot easily simulate, including real deadlines, customer feedback, and problem solving under conditions of limited time and resources. Seeing that their work matters to others and that work quality has consequences can motivate young people not just to do an assigned job but to rethink their commitment to school and learning.

An important benefit of work-based learning is the opportunity for young people to develop meaningful relationships with adults. Research on youth who overcome adversity indicates that strong relationships with adults are essential to healthy development and success.[4] According to Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner, work-based learning can "permit aspiring youngsters to work directly alongside accomplished professionals, hence establishing personal bonds as well as a sense of progress towards an end."[5]

Linking Academic Achievement and Work for Out-of-School Youth

Most discussions of linking school and work focus on preparing young people still in school for the changing world. However, economic prospects are bleakest for young adults who fail to complete high school.

The out-of-school youth population has been generally ill-served by education, training, and employment programs created by federal and state funds. The "second chance" system for out-of-school populations is essentially a "second class" system, dominated by short-duration programs that, at best, have short-duration impacts.[6] Given the multiple barriers these young people face in trying to re-enter the worlds of school and work, it is not surprising that short-duration programs have proven inadequate.

Efforts to improve earning and learning for out-of-school youth require unique and flexible institutional arrangements. Academic instruction must be provided in venues that are accessible and without stigma, for example in community colleges, alternative diploma programs, and other community-based settings. Case management support is typically needed while youth with little labor market experience or success search for and become acclimated to work. Out-of-school youth also tend to need some assurance of paid work while in learning programs.

Nonetheless, the design principles that characterize "best practice" efforts for linking schools and employers also guide some of the most successful programs for out-of-school youth, from the residential Job Corps to alternative diploma programs and work-and-learning models such as YouthBuild.[7] These include:

- Centrality of work-based learning
- Pedagogy that is active and experiential
- Emphasis on youth development, responsibility, and empowerment
- Strong relationships with adults and peers
- Support that is consistent over time
- Standards for accomplishment that are rigorous and respected by both postsecondary institutions and employers

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References and Sources for Further Information

National School-to-Work Office Web Site: www.stw.ed.gov

This web site has a wealth of STW-related information, including information on the School To Work Opportunities Act, federal grantees, aspects of STW system-building, and links to other relevant sites.

National School-to-Work Learning & Information Center: tel: 1-800-251-7236, fax: 202-401-6211, e-mail: stw-lc@ed.gov.

This center is a great resource for information about all aspects of STW, and provides many different services. For details, call the center or learn more about it on the National School-to-Work Office web site listed above.

Kopp, Hilary, Kazis, Richard & Churchill, Andrew. (1995). *Promising practices: A study of ten school-to-career programs*. Boston: Jobs for the Future.

Goldberger, Susan. (1993). *Creating an American-style youth apprenticeship program: A formative evaluation of project ProTech*. Boston: Jobs for the Future.

Goldberger, Susan, Kazis, Richard, & O'Flanagan, Mary Kathleen. (1994). *Learning through work: Designing and implementing quality worksite learning for high school students*. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Grubb, W. Norton. (1996). *Learning to work: The case for reintegrating job training and education*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Resnick, Lauren. (1987). Learning in school and out. *Educational Researcher*, 19(9), 13–20.

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[1] This summary of STC was developed for the Committee for Economic Development.

[2] Parnell, Dale. (1985). *The neglected majority.* Washington DC: The Community College Press; The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship. (1988). *The forgotten half: Non-college youth in America. An interim report on the school-to-work transition.* Washington DC: Author. Commission on Skills of the American Workforce. (1990). *America's choice: High skills or low wages!* Rochester NY: National Center on Education and the Economy.

[3] Stern, David et al. (1994). *School-based enterprise: Productive learning in American high schools.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[4] Walker, Gary. (1997) Out of school and unemployed: Principles for more effective policies and programs. In Pines, Marion, (Ed.), A *generation of challenge: Toward a policy for out-of-school and out-of-work youth*. Baltimore, MD: Sar Levitan Center for Policy Studies of Johns Hopkins University. P. 73.

[5] Gardner, Howard. (1991). *The unschooled mind: How children think and how schools should teach.* New York: Basic Books. P. 122.

[6] Grubb, W. Norton. (1996). *Learning to work: The case for reintegrating job training and education.* New York: Russell Sage. P. 62.

[7] Kazis, Richard and Kopp, Hilary. (1997). *Both sides now: New directions in promoting work and learning for disadvantaged youth*. Boston: Jobs for the Future. Pines, Marion, ed. *op. cit.*

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Appendix II

The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program

This appendix provides:

- ✓ an overview of the EZ/EC program
- ✓ an update on the status of Round II of the program
- ✓ a list of Round I designated Urban EZs and ECs
- ✓ references for more information

Overview

Introduction

The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program was developed by the Clinton Administration, with the support of Congress, to revitalize the nation's deteriorating urban and rural communities. Many past revitalization efforts have been top-down, addressing a specific set of issues. The EZ/EC program, on the other hand, seeks to encourage community-based revitalization efforts that focus on a range of key areas: infrastructure and economic development *as well as* community and human resource development (education, training, safety, human services.) In the first round of the program, 105 communities were designated as Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities. A second round has been authorized by legislation, but funding is pending.

Condensed Timeline

- Clinton appointed an inter-agency working group following his election to work on issues of poverty and distress—headed up by HUD, Dept. of Agriculture, and 14 other agencies. They proposed the EZ/EC program.
- Spring 1993: Clinton Administration sent EZ/EC legislation to Congress.
- August 10, 1993: Administration proposal included in Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act of 1993 with minimal modification.
- January 1994, Clinton announced the RFP process and HUD issued guidelines. Communities applying for EZ/EC status were required to submit a strategic plan.
- December 1994, HUD and USDA EZ/EC designations announced.
- August 1997, Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 authorizes designation of an additional 22 Empowerment Zones under a second round of the program, with approval of funding for these Zones still pending. The second round is characterized by some new and different benefits and rules for EZs.

The EZ/EC Program: The Basics

- Communities create a strategic plan with a vision of what they hope to become in the future as well as articulated steps and strategies to achieve that vision.
- Community-based governing structure: strategic plan is developed by and carried out by local government or a non-profit agency, such as a community development corporation or community-based organization.
- The program encourages all community stakeholders to take part in the planning, including government, education, business and industry, community organizations, law enforcement, as well as community residents. The federal government provides:

  block grant funding

  tax incentives (EZs are eligible for more incentives than ECs, incentives include: wage credits, tax deductions, tax-exempt bond financing)

  a range of technical advice and assistance re: developing and implementing strategic plans, understanding the resources and help available from the federal government.
- The program is very flexible and funding can be used to carry out a variety of activities (see section on spending guidelines).
- Specified unemployment and poverty criteria must be met by communities to be eligible for participation in the EZ/EC program. These guidelines are meant to insure that the most distressed areas are addressed.

Program Framework

The EZ/EC program is based on four principles[1]:

- *economic opportunity,* including job creation within the community and throughout the region, as well as entrepreneurial initiatives, small business expansion and training for jobs that offer upward mobility;
- *sustainable community development*, to advance the creation of livable and vibrant communities through comprehensive approaches that coordinate economic, physical, community and human development;
- *community-based partnerships,* involving the participation of all segments of the community, including the political and governmental leadership, community groups, health and social service groups, environmental groups, religious organizations, the private and non-profit sectors, centers of learning, and other community organizations;
- *strategic vision for change,* which identifies what the community will become and a strategic map for revitalization. The vision should build on assets and coordinate a response to community needs in a comprehensive fashion. It should also set goals and performance benchmarks for measuring progress and establish a framework for evaluating and adjusting the revitalization plan.

Designation and Funding Level of EZ/ECs

- After receiving about 500 applications for EZ/EC status, Secretaries of Housing and Agriculture designated the urban and rural EZ/ECs, respectively, in December 1994.
- One-hundred and five communities were designated.
- Of the 105 communities, there are:

  6 urban EZs (Atlanta, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia/Camden) Funding: $100m

  3 rural EZs (Kentucky Highlands, KY, Mid Delta, MS, Rio Grand Valley, TX) Funding: $40m

  60 urban ECs Funding: $2.95m

  30 rural ECs Funding: $2.95m

  4 Enhanced ECs Funding: $2.95m and additional funds from the HUD Economic Development Initiative Grant: $22m and $22m loan guarantees

  2 Supplemental EZs Los Angeles and Cleveland were funded under HUD's Economic Development Initiative—$125m for Los Angeles, $87m for Cleveland. Cleveland also received $3m funding as an EC.

- A total of $1 billion in funding was made available for Round One from the Title X Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) that is administered by Health and Human Services. Funding is channeled to the states, which then distribute the funding to the localities.

Administration/Oversight

- Program administered by HUD (urban sites) and USDA (rural sites). Other agencies involved as well, such as Small Business Administration, which will provide "One Stop Capital Shops" to help small businesses and provide capital to EZs and ECs. The treasury will administer tax benefits for EZs and ECs.
- Community Empowerment Board—Federal-level board composed of Vice President Al Gore and heads of major domestic agencies, which oversees program coordination and implementation. Plays a role in ensuring all agencies are cooperative with the program and have a role where it is useful.
- EZ/EC Task Force—HUD initially established an EZ/EC Task Force that was responsible for day-to-day operations of the initiative and provided two main types of support for EZ/ECs: (1) coordination team to provide information and assistance re: federal resources available, information on federal agencies and procedures as applies to EZ/ECs; and (2) resource team, composed of consultants, to offer technical assistance to the sites in implementing their strategic plans. This task force has since been reorganized into a new unit called the EZ/EC Initiative Unit.

Social Service Block Grant Spending Guidelines/Rules

HUD issued a Final Rule to establish the guidelines of the program.[2] Under the Rule, funds made available to EZ/ECs from the SSBG funding may be used to achieve three main goals, by performing one or more specified types of activities.[3] Requirements on the activities EZ/ECs should pursue were written fairly broadly to ensure flexibility and communities' ability to select activities/programs that best address the situation of that community. The three goals are:

1. The goal of economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependencies;
2. The goal of self-sufficiency, including retention or prevention of dependencies;
3. The goal of prevention or remedying the neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and/or adults unable to protect their own interest; and the goal of preservation, rehabilitation, or reuniting of families.

Several program activities are described as options for achieving these goals, including education, employment, and training. Communities may try to achieve the first goal by "funding community and economic development services focused on disadvantaged adults and youths, including skills training" and "supporting programs that promote home ownership, education or other routes to economic independence for low-income families, youths, and other individuals." EZ/ECs are clearly encouraged to pursue programs that support education and job training as key strategies to improve the conditions of zone/community residents.

Status of Round Two of the EZ/EC Program

The August 5, 1997 Balanced Budget Agreement signed into law by President Clinton authorized the designation of 22 new Empowerment Zones (no more than 17 urban zones and 5 rural zones). The future of the second round depends on funding. However, even if additional funding is not made available, HUD can designate communities that would then be eligible for tax and other benefits that are applicable to EZs.

The legislation authorizing the new EZ states that 22 new zones can be designated, two under the rules of Round One and twenty under the rules of Round Two. Some of the benefits available to first-round EZ/ECs will not be available to second-round EZ/ECs, while some new ones were added, both some that are applicable to first- and second-round EZ/ECs and some that are applicable to the second-round EZ/ECs only. Two key new benefits applicable to all EZ/ECs are:

- "a public school renovation tax credit, which will promote the creation of more rigorous schools and job skilled youth"; and
- "a work opportunity tax credit, enabling employers to claim a $2,100 tax credit for hiring at-risk youth and other hard-to-employ residents."

References and Sources for Further Information:

The information presented in this appendix on the EZ/EC program and the future of Round Two is taken from the following sources:

- EZ/EC Web Site: www.ezec.gov
- *EZ/EC Flash*, 8/13/97, "It's True...Announcing...Round II!"

  This bulletin from HUD announces Round II of the EZ/EC program.
- *Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community Provisions of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (H.R. 2014)*
- *EZ/EC Implementation Guide*

  This guide, accessible from the EZ/EC web site or from the EZ/EC Initiative Unit at (202) 708-6339, gives a more detailed look at the history of the development of the program, types of federal tax incentives for business, supports available for EZ/ECs from the federal government, and much more.
- *Community Development: Status of Urban Empowerment Zones*, GAO, December, 1996.

  This report is an interim report describing the status of implementation in the zones, barriers and supports identified by program participants, and the plans for evaluating the program. Available from the GAO, telephone: (202) 512-6000, web site: www.gao.gov.
- *Final Rule: Designation of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities*, 24 CFR Part 597.

  Department of Housing and Urban Development. Available from the EZ/EC web site, or from the EZ/EC Initiative Unit at (202) 708-6339.

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[1] Following text is taken from HUD Final Rule 24 CFR Part 597.

[2] Final Rule 24 CFR Part 597.

[3] Section 597.200 (d)(12)(ii) of HUD Final Rule 24 CFR Part 597.

First Round Urban Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities

Enterprise Communities

Birmingham, AL
Little Rock, AR
Phoenix, AZ
Los Angeles, CA
San Diego, CA
San Francisco, CA
Denver, CO
Bridgeport, CT
New Haven, CT
Wilmington, DE
District of Columbia, DC
Dade County, FL
Tampa, FL
Albany, GA
Des Moines, IA
East St. Louis, IL
Springfield, IL
Indianapolis, IN
Louisville, KY
New Orleans, LA
Ouachita Parish, LA
Lowell, MA
Springfield, MA
Flint, MI
Muskegon, MI
Minneapolis, MN
St. Paul, MN
St. Louis, MO
Jackson, MS
Omaha, NE
Las Vegas, NV
Manchester, NH
Newark, NJ
Albuquerque, NM
Albany-Troy-Schenechtady, NY
Buffalo, NY
Newburgh, NY
Rochester, NY
Charlotte, NC
Akron, OH
Columbus, OH
Oklahoma City, OK
Portland, OR
Harrisburg, PA
Pittsburgh, PA
Providence, RI
Charleston, SC
Memphis, TN
Nashville/Davidson, TN
Dallas, TX
El Paso, TX
San Antonio, TX
Waco, TX
Ogden, UT
Norfolk, VA
Burlington, VT
Seattle, WA
Tacoma, WA
Huntington, WV
Milwaukee, WI

Enhanced Enterprise Communities

Boston, MA
Kansas City, KS/MO
Houston, TX
Oakland, CA

Supplemental Empowerment Zones

Cleveland, OH
Los Angeles, CA

Empowerment Zones

Atlanta, GA
Chicago, IL
Baltimore, MD
Detroit, MI
New York, NY
Philadelphia/Camden, PA/NJ

References and Sources for Further Information

To find out if your community is currently pursuing designation as an Empowerment Zone under Round Two of the initiative, contact Dennis Kane, head of the EZ/EC Initiative Unit at HUD, at (202) 708-6339. In addition, since EZ/EC plans are often implemented by city economic development agencies or local community-based organizations, you can try contacting these agencies in your area to find out if they have a process underway.

Appendix III

Federal Grants Relevant to Designing STC Systems for Youth At Risk

This appendix provides:

- ✓ an overview of federal grants
  - Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants
  - Out-of-School Youth STW Grants
  - Out-of-School Youth Opportunities Area Demonstration Project Grants ("Kulick Grants")
- ✓ references for more information

Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants

Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants are joint Department of Labor and Department of Education grants awarded to local school-to-work partnerships that operate in high poverty areas. Under the grant, school-to-work partnerships must focus on the special needs associated with high poverty areas. As the grant announcement notes, these communities "have particular challenges in implementing school-to-work programs due to a lack of large public and private employers, students who may be unaware of postsecondary opportunities, students with strong negative peer pressure and dropout rates that may exceed 50 percent....These initiatives offer young Americans in these communities access to school-to--work opportunities programs specifically designed to address barriers to their successful participation in such programs and to prepare them for further education and training and first jobs in high-skill, high-wage careers."

Grants can be funded up to five years (and usually are). The departments give invitational priority to EZ/ECs, but they receive no competitive advantage. Of many selection criteria used in awarding these grants, one is the extent to which the plan ensures coordination with many parties, including, if applicable, the EZ/EC.

Out-of-School Youth STW Grants

Out-of-School Youth (OSY) grants are competitive grants made available by the Departments of Labor and Education. The departments recognize that school-to-career has been hard to develop for out-of-school youth, as most school-to-career efforts have been designed within the schools. This grant program was designed to "accelerate the development of promising School-to-Work practices for OSY or to add new school-to-work components to existing initiatives."[1] The OSY grants support the

development of existing models/programs that include STC approaches for out-of-school youth, expansion of these models, and dissemination of results with other service deliverers and STC initiatives working with out-of-school youth.

Opportunity Areas for Out-of-School Youth Pilot Project Grants

"Kulick Grants"

In 1996, the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration launched a new pilot demonstration project to improve labor market access and outcomes for out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. The project is targeted at areas within the federally designated Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Three sites were funded in 1996 and three more in 1997. Additionally, $250 million has been appropriated for a third round in fiscal year 1999. As the grant announcement states, these sites "would serve as demonstrations for a comprehensive approach aimed at improving the labor market prospects of out-of-school youth in high unemployment areas. This demonstration program would be designed to provide employment, education and training opportunities, mentoring support, leadership, development and other services as needed for all youth in the target areas designated as Empowerment Zones (EZ) or Enterprise Communities (EC)."[2] A specific goal of this initiative is to attain employment rates of 80 percent for this group of youth.

A key goal of the program is to build a system, rather than just a set of programs:

> The aim of the demonstration is to build a system of constructive education/training/employment and personal development activities for out-of-school youth that parallels the system being implemented for a school youth under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act so as to raise and maintain substantially higher employment rates for out-of-school youth....Grant funds shall be used for building appropriate activities into a coherent system that connects disadvantaged youth to long term development relationships and services needed for permanent long term employment.

An important component of this pilot is the emphasis on partnerships. In order to create a viable system, it is important for all relevant parties to work together. The grant requires that there is sign-on from many important parties, including public schools, local EZ/EC governing board, representatives of major employer networks, including those connected to school-to-career, the state school-to-career partnership, and, if applicable, the local school-to-career partnership. These parties are expected to play a significant role by leveraging other resources and undertaking complementary activities to help attain the ultimate goals (for example, schools are expected to reduce dropout and truancy rates).

Current Kulick Grant Recipients

Round 1 - 1996

City	Organization	Funding
Chicago, IL	City of Chicago 510 Peshigo Center, Suite 2A Chicago, IL 60611	$3,000,000
Houston, TX	Houston Works, Inc. 600 Jefferson, Suite 1300 Houston, TX 77002	$2,895,055
Los Angeles, CA	City of Los Angeles Community Development Department 215 W 6th Street, 10th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90014	$3,000,000

Round 2 - 1997

City	Organization	Funding
New York, NY	New York City Department of Employment 220 Church Street New York, NY 10013	$2,214,179
Boston, MA	Boston Economic Development Corporation 43 Hawkins Street Boston, MA 02114	$2,208.099
Lake Cumberland, KY	Lake Cumberland Area Development District 2374 Lakeway Drive, P.O. Box 1570 Russel Springs, KY 46242	$2,246,838

References and Sources for Further Information

Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants and Out-of-School Youth STW Grants

- National School-to-Work Office web site at www.stw.gov
- Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration web site at www.doleta.gov
- National School-to-Work Learning & Information Center: tel: 1-800-251-7236, fax: 202-401-6211, e-mail: stw-lc@ed.gov.
- Department of Labor/Department of Education Solicitation for Grant Application for:

  Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants, printed in the *Federal Register*, 4/14/97, volume 62, number 71.

  Out-of-School Youth Grants, printed in the *Federal Register*, 7/29/96, volume 61, number 146.

Youth Opportunity Area Demonstration Grants

Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration web site at www.doleta.gov

Department of Labor Solicitation for Grant Application for Out-of-School Youth Opportunity Area

Demonstration, announced in the *Federal Register*, 4/11/97, volume 62, number 70.

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[1] Department of Labor/Department of Education Out-of-School Youth Grant Announcement.
[2] Department of Labor Kulick Grant Announcement.

Appendix IV

Communities and Individuals Interviewed

Bridgeport, CT

Frank Grazyinksi, The Workplace
Janice Willis, Bridgeport Office of Grants Administration
Janice Martin, Bridgeport Business Council

New Haven, CT

Michael Mongiello, New Haven Public School District
Rhoda Zahler, City of New Haven Office of Business Development

Baltimore, MD

Karen Sitnick, Mayor's Office of Employment Development

Kansas City, KS and MO

Doug Sutton, Missouri School-to-Work Office
Alicia Melgoza, Full Employment Council
Cal Bender, Mid-America Regional Council

St. Louis, MO

Doug Sutton, Missouri School-to-Work Office
Patricia Donohue, St. Louis Regional Alliance, St. Louis Community College
Chad Cooper, St. Louis Development Corporation

Boston, MA

Susan Lang, Boston Private Industry Council
Rebekah Lashman, Boston Private Industry Council
Shirley Carrington, Boston Empowerment Center

Charlotte, NC

Greg Gift, Charlotte/Mecklenburg School District

Columbus, OH

Elaine Fencl, Regional School-to-Career Coordinator for region covering Columbus
Barb Brugman, City of Columbus
Leslie Steinau, Columbus Public Schools

Portland, OR

Cathy Treves, Portland Public Schools
Greg White, Regional Workforce Development Board

Providence, RI

Judy Marmeras-Maloney, School-to-Work Transition Opportunities, Rhode Island Department of Education
Anne Bransfield, The Providence Plan

Seattle, WA

Alan Hardcastle, Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board (Washington's STW office)
Ben Walters, City of Seattle

Tacoma, WA

Alan Hardcastle, Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board (Washington's STW office)
Gil Mendoza, formerly with Tacoma Public Schools
Chris Andersen, Tacoma Empowerment Consortium
Laurie Arnold, Tacoma Empowerment Consortium

The Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory
A Program of The Education Alliance at Brown University

Adeline Becker
Executive Director, The Education Alliance

Phil Zarlengo
Executive Director, the LAB at Brown University

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